

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-3. (Cancelled).

4. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A network system according to claim 1, further comprising:

an information terminal connectable to a network;

a distribution server for distributing video and/or audio data to said information terminal through said network while said information terminal is connected to said network;

a storage server for storing a message of video and/or image contents, alone or along with audio contents, sent from said information terminal to said network in response to the video and/or audio data that has been distributed to the information terminal from said distribution server while said information terminal is connected to said network, and for facilitating a display of the message video and/or image contents on a display at a predetermined time;

an authentication server for authenticating said information terminal when said information terminal requests a start of distribution of the data, using at least one of a time at which said information terminal requests the start of distribution of the data and an identification number of said information terminal;

a call processing server for performing a call processing process for connecting said information terminal to said network if said authentication server authenticates said information terminal successfully, the authentication being successful if the call processing server confirms either: (1) the time at which said information terminal requests the start of distribution is in agreement with a range of a pre-registered effective connection time zone; or (2) the identification number of said information terminal is in agreement with a pre-registered identification number;
and

a gateway device for sending said message from said information terminal through said network to said storage server after the gateway device has detected a signal representing a start of transmission of said message sent from said information terminal until the gateway device detects a signal representing an end of transmission of said message sent from said information terminal;

wherein said storage server has receiving means for receiving said message sent from said gateway device through said network, and storing means for storing said message received by said receiving means, and wherein said signal representing the start of transmission and said signal representing the end of transmission comprise push button audio tones from said information terminal.

5. (Original) The network system according to claim 4, wherein said storage server also has transmitting means for sending said message stored by said storing means to said network.

6. (Original) The network system according to claim 4, wherein said storage server also has display means for displaying said message stored by said storing means.

Claims 7-9. (Cancelled).

10. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A network system ~~according to claim 7, further~~ comprising:

a first information terminal and a second information terminal which are connectable to a network;

a distribution server for distributing video and/or audio data to said second information terminal through said network while said second information terminal which is designated as a distribution destination by said first information terminal is connected to said network;

a storage server for storing a message of video and/or image contents, alone or along with audio contents, sent from said second information terminal to said network in response to the video and/or audio data that has been distributed to the second information terminal from said distribution server while said second information terminal is connected to said network, and for facilitating a display of the message video and/or image contents on a display at a predetermined time;

an authentication server for authenticating said first information terminal when said first information terminal requests a start of distribution of the data to said second information terminal, using at least one of a time at which said first information terminal requests the start of distribution of the data and an identification number of said first information terminal;

a call processing server for performing a call processing process for connecting said second information terminal to said network if said authentication server authenticates said first information terminal successfully, the authentication being successful if the call processing server confirms either: (1) the time at which said first information terminal requests the start of distribution is in agreement with a range of a pre-registered effective connection time zone; or (2) the identification number of said first information terminal is in agreement with a pre-registered identification number; and

a gateway device for sending said message from said second information terminal through said network to said storage server after the gateway device has detected a signal representing a start of transmission of said message sent from said second information terminal until the gateway device detects a signal representing an end of transmission of said message sent from said second information terminal;

wherein said storage server has receiving means for receiving said message sent from said gateway device through said network, and storing means for storing said message received by said receiving means, and wherein said signal representing the start of transmission and said signal representing the end of transmission comprise push button audio tones from said information terminal.

11. (Original) The network system according to claim 10, wherein said storage server also has transmitting means for sending said message stored by said storing means to said network.

12. (Original) The network system according to claim 10, wherein said storage server also has display means for displaying said message stored by said storing means.

Claims 13-15. (Cancelled).

16. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method according to claim 13 of providing a data distribution service, comprising the steps of:

distributing video and/or audio data from a distribution server to an information terminal via a downlink through a network based on a request from said information terminal for starting distributing said video and/or audio data;

permitting sending of a message of video and/or image contents, alone or along with audio contents, from said information terminal via an uplink through said network to a storage

server in response to said video and/or audio data that has been distributed to the information terminal from said distribution server;

storing said message sent from said information terminal in said storage server and facilitating a display of the message video and/or image contents on a display at a predetermined time;

authenticating said information terminal with an authentication server when said information terminal requests a start of distribution of the data, using at least one of a time at which said information terminal requests the start of distribution of the data and an identification number of said information terminal; and

performing a call processing process with a call processing server for connecting said information terminal to said network if said authentication server authenticates said information terminal successfully, the authentication being successful if the call processing process confirms either: (1) the time at which said information terminal requests the start of distribution is in agreement with a range of a pre-registered effective connection time zone; or (2) the identification number of said information terminal is in agreement with a pre-registered identification number;

wherein in said step of distributing the data to said information terminal, said distribution server distributes the data through said network to said information terminal while said information terminal is being connected to said network by said call processing server,

wherein in said step of sending said message to said storage server, said information terminal is permitted to send a signal representing a start of transmission of said message, said message itself, and a signal representing an end of transmission of said message, said method further comprising the step of:

sending, from a gateway device, said message sent from said information terminal through said network to said storage server after the gateway device has detected the signal representing the start of transmission of said message sent from said information terminal until the

gateway device detects the signal representing the end of transmission of said message sent from said information terminal;

wherein in said step of storing said message, said storage server stores said message sent from said gateway device through said network, and wherein said signal representing the start of transmission and said signal representing the end of transmission comprise push button audio tones from said information terminal.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of:

sending said message stored by said storage server through said network to external display means.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of:

displaying said message stored by said storage server on display means in said storage server.

Claims 19-21 (Cancelled).

22. (Currently Amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method according to claim 19 of providing a data distribution service, comprising the steps of:

distributing video and/or audio data from a distribution server to a second information terminal, which is designated as a distribution destination by a first information terminal, via a downlink through a network based on a request from said first information terminal for starting distributing said video and/or audio data;

sending a message of video and/or image contents, alone or along with audio contents, from said second information terminal via an uplink through said network to a storage server in response to said video and/or audio data that has been distributed to the information terminal from said distribution server;

storing said message sent from said second information terminal in said storage server and facilitating a display of the message video and/or image contents on a display at a predetermined time;

authenticating said first information terminal with an authentication server when said first information terminal requests a start of distribution of the data to said second information terminal, using at least one of a time at which said first information terminal requests the start of distribution of the data and an identification number of said first information terminal; and

performing a call processing process with a call processing server for connecting said second information terminal to said network if said authentication server authenticates said first information terminal successfully, the authentication being successful if the call processing step confirms either: (1) the time at which said first information terminal requests the start of distribution is in agreement with a range of a pre-registered effective connection time zone; or (2) the identification number of said first information terminal is in agreement with a pre-registered identification number;

wherein in said step of distributing the data to said second information terminal, said distribution server distributes the data through said network to said second information terminal while said second information terminal is being connected to said network by said call processing server,

wherein in said step of sending said message to said storage server, said second information terminal sends a signal representing a start of transmission of said message, sends said message, and sends a signal representing an end of transmission of said message, said method further comprising the step of:

sending, from a gateway device, said message sent from said second information terminal through said network to said storage server after the gateway device has detected the signal representing the start of transmission of said message sent from said second information terminal until the gateway device detects the signal representing the end of transmission of said message sent from said second information terminal;

wherein in said step of storing said message, said storage server stores said message sent from said gateway device through said network, and wherein said signal representing the start of transmission and said signal representing the end of transmission comprise push button audio tones from said information terminal.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

sending said message stored by said storage server through said network to external display means.

24. (Original) The method according to claim 22, further comprising the step of:

displaying said message stored by said storage server on display means in said storage server.